

**MINUTES OF WICKLOW MUNICIPAL DISTRICT MEETING
MONDAY 24th February 2020 3PM**

DISTRICT CHAMBER, TOWN HALL

Present: Cathaoirleach Shay Cullen, Councillors Gail Dunne, Paul O'Brien, Mary Kavanagh.

In attendance: District Manager Brian Gleeson, District Engineer Kevin Scanlon, Senior Engineer Declan Marnane, Executive Engineer Mark Devereux, Executive Engineer Avril Hill, Acting District Administrator Anne Marie Kelly, Clerical Officer Deirdre Bradshaw, Myles Buchanan Wicklow People, Ivan Sheane Wicklow Active Retirement.

Cathaoirleach Shay Cullen opened the meeting at 3.02 pm.

Cllr Irene Winters entered the meeting at 3.06pm

Cllr John Snell entered the meeting at 3.09pm

ITEM 1.

Confirmation of the Minutes from the Wicklow Municipal District Meeting held on the 27th January 2020.

It was proposed by Councillor Gail Dunne, seconded by Councillor Paul O'Brien and unanimously agreed to confirm and sign the minutes from the Wicklow Municipal District meeting held on the 27th January 2020.

ITEM 2.

To consider report in accordance with Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended; Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 – 2006 as amended: 36 Social Housing units at Greenhill Road, Wicklow Town.

The Chief Executives Report of February 2020 had been circulated to the members in accordance with Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended; RE: Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 – 2006 as amended, regarding the development of 36 housing units at Greenhill Road, Wicklow Town.

Executive Engineer Avril Hill and Executive Engineer Mark Devereux presented the details of this application to the meeting.

- The units are to be 9m maximum ridge height with breaks in the layout of the houses. Also the density of houses in this development is lower than what is permitted normally (8 less units than is permitted). This addresses the concerns over the impact on the views.
- Chicanes are to be incorporated to slow down traffic in the estate and the junction into the estate has been altered which should alleviate some of the traffic concerns
- The corner units will now face the road

- Dedicated parking is to be provided for the proposed dwellings as well as adequate green areas on site should address parking and available green space concerns
- It was proposed by Cllr Irene Winters and seconded by Cllr Shay Cullen and unanimously agreed by the members to request that the Roads Department WCC carry out a Road Safety Audit at the junction of the Green Hill Road and Convent Road independent of this Part 8 application. The members voiced serious concerns regarding safety issues at this junction with regards to site-lines and a build up of traffic so close to 2 National Schools. Concern was raised with regards to the extra traffic which will be generated at this junction due to the proposed GAA pitch and the 36 social housing units proposed for the Greenhill Road.
- The members however broadly welcomed the proposals for additional social housing in the town, and felt that the revisions to the application had taken on board the majority of concerns which had been raised by the existing residents.

It was proposed by Cllr Shay Cullen and seconded by Cllr Paul O'Brien and unanimously agreed by all members present that the Council proceed with the development of 36 Houses on the Greenhill Road, Wicklow Town as set out in the Chief Executives Report of February 2020 and circulated to the elected members viz:-

FOR (6)	Cllrs Shay Cullen, John Snell, Gail Dunne, Paul O'Brien, Mary Kavanagh & Irene Winters
AGAINST (0)	
ABSENT (0)	
ABSTAINING (0)	

The members thanked and commended the housing staff for their presentations.

ITEM 3.

Wicklow District Engineers Report.

Housing:

- Work continuing on general maintenance and repairs.
- Technical support to WCC-Housing Dept:
 - Re-lets (quantities increasing following transfers to new houses):
 1. 4 standard. 0 purchases.
 2. 2 returned to WCC Housing Dept.
 3. 4 have works continuing on site.
 - DPGs: 3 due to start on site. 0 out to tender. 1 being assessed.
 - Part V: 0 houses snagged.

Roads and Footpaths:

- 2020 roads grant allocations received for county. Individual jobs to be agreed next.
- Drainage blockages in various locations repaired.
- Gritting carried out on 14 nights. 1 of these were double runs.
- Road Opening Licences (approx. 10) continue to be processed and agreed.
- 3 road closure applications processed.

Environment:

- Brittas Bay (LAMA Silver medal) mowing trial. 1st cut complete. 2 more to follow.

- Great response to survey of sea buckthorn. Planning more projects and trials.
- Hedge cutting and edge cleaning continues. Notices sent to 12 landowners.

Planning

- Part 8 project currently on display is Ballintesklin.
- Reports on applications and compliance with applications continue to be issued.
- Estate taking in charge reports and inspections continue with WCC staff.

Playgrounds

- New playground in Roundwood, substantially complete. Community athletics project next door is ongoing with site works and clearance.
- Ongoing maintenance and repairs.

Public Liability

- 6 new cases (4 material, 2 personal injury) and 1 settled/closed.

Discretionary Works:

- Finance and progress update to be discussed at meeting.
- Merrymeeting footpath quotes due back this week. Start in next 2 weeks.
- Newtown traffic calming road crossings done and works continuing at lights.
- Ballynerrin playground lights. Ducts and cables installed, awaiting delivery of lights.
- Brittas Bay crossing substantially complete. Path and crossing done. Lights ordered.

Town & Village Renewal Grants and Roundwood Car Park

- KS to update members with progress report at meeting.

Councillors Questions and Queries.

The members raised concern with regards to the public lighting in the Town. It was stated that there are a number of lights which have not been working for up to six months after being reported and dissatisfaction was expressed with SSE Airtricity's perceived lack of response to repair the lights. It was said around 740 lights were reported out across the county that we should have a direct line to SSE Airtricity to report the outages. The Cllrs wish to look at the contract for a clause for non delivery of service as the lack of lighting in places is resulting in accidents. It was also stated that some of the new poles did not have a number tags on them so they could not be accurately reported if they were not working.

One of the members requested another update on the expected opening of the playground in Roundwood as the playground now looks finished but is not open for use. The agreement for access needs to be organised as soon as possible.

The members looked for an update on the hedge cutting as it the last week of the season. The last twelve notices were sent out to those who have not yet complied and District Engineer Kevin Scanlon stated that the rate of compliance was around 94%. If there were safety concerns regarding obstruction to footpaths/road signs etc, the council are entitled to go out and cut.

Cllr John Snell queried how the public liability cases were being logged and reacted to as they came in. Are they repeat cases and are records available to be seen? District Manager Brian Gleeson stated that the records were confidential and were dealt with on a case by case basis, and on their own merits. A Hotspot report for repairs comes from IPB as does a list of where accidents occur in relation to personal injury claims.

Other issues raised included:

- Cost of placing road closure ads with the Wicklow People is significantly larger than what the Wexford People charge –can other advertising platforms be used?
- Cllr Gail Dunne requested a report on what roads were being considered for the Surface Dressing Grants. District Engineer Kevin Scanlon said the roads were graded on how bad they are and will then be considered.
- Pot holes appearing from the recent bad rain need to be filled as soon as possible

ITEM 4.

Fitzwilliam Square

District Engineer Kevin Scanlon informed the members that the contractors are currently working on the railings and the wall. The railings are being repaired in situ and are not being taken away as previously planned. The wall is to be rebuilt & plastered. The archaeologist continues to be on site at designated times during the works to oversee. There were no complaints on the closure of the bottom road but will be other road closures in place in the coming weeks. Work on the final design is progressing also.

The members had some questions about the trees that had been removed from the Square as they had had complaints and District Engineer Kevin Scanlon is to check on the plan for the trees to be replanted. The old trees were removed as they held no historic value and were also causing cracking of the wall and ground.

Other issues/questions included:

- Impact on some businesses in town. Signs for businesses close to the square to say they are open. Also businesses on South Quay reporting difficulty getting deliveries as no signage entering the town about the works ongoing. Some trucks unable to get where they need to deliver to as were unaware of the road closures.
- The members queried the final cost of the works and District Manager Brian Gleeson said that he will clarify costs as soon as possible.

ITEM 5.

2020 Discretionary Funding

District Engineer Kevin Scanlon informed the members that he was compiling a list of possible projects from the area GSS's, emails and calls coming into the Wicklow Municipal District office for consideration. It will be added to as the queries come in. The members requested a copy of the list of the projects as they were holding their own meeting on another date.

District Manager Brian Gleeson advised the members that there is €152,000 planned on existing projects and that there will be an over-spend of €21,000 carried forward from 2019 if all planned projects go ahead. Also to bear this in mind money for 'match funding' if some of the grant applications applied for by the Town Team are successful.

The Cllrs agreed to meet on March 3rd at 8pm to discuss the discretionary fund further.

ITEM 6.

Presentation from Team Build – A – Bots from Wicklow Montessori School

The sixth class robotics team from Wicklow Montessori, who were crowned overall winners of the First Lego League Regional Finals held in DCU, were invited to the meeting to make a presentation.

Firstly, they surveyed Wicklow town, identified public spaces and recorded problems such as the number of derelict and empty buildings, narrow footpaths and the fact the town doesn't currently have a hotel. A one-way system was suggested as an option which would allow for the widening of footpaths.

The Wicklow Montessori pupils also built a model community centre, located by the water front, which included a games room, cafe, gym, scout hall, sensory garden and a prayer/meditation room. Solar panels run the community centre which also features a roof top garden to grow fruit and vegetables for use by the cafe.

Team 'Build-A-Bots' now go forward to the All-Ireland finals taking place in March.

ITEM 7

Correspondence.

Acting District Administrator Anne Marie Kelly read out an email received from Fiona Byrne, Group Leader with the 7th Wicklow Scout Troup to the members. It leads on from her previous correspondence in relation to bringing the hall on South Quay up to current fire safety regulations. In her email, Ms. Byrne attached the fire safety standards for Scout Dens and Meeting places from Scouting Ireland and quotes for the necessary fire proofing and installation of a fire alarm.

She has answered the query from a previous email in relation to some of their volunteers carrying out work for them. She said they did explore the idea but due to the nature of the works, it was necessary that they were carried out by professionals. Their financial target is roughly €30,000 and they plan to apply for community funding.

The members requested further detail to be submitted in relation to who owns the building where the Scout Den is based or if they are renting it. They have requested this information before they meet to discuss the discretionary fund on March 3rd.

ITEM 8.

AOB.

Cllr Mary Kavanagh mentioned the derelict buildings in the town and how neglected they looked and that the town was let down by the crumbling buildings. With the new Library and works at Fitzwilliam Square works happening it was a shame the rest of the town was letting it down and they would discuss this at the discretionary budget meeting.

District Manager Brian Gleeson mentioned the newly launched Rates Incentive Scheme which he hoped would entice new business into the town and hopefully fill some of the vacant buildings in the town.

Cllr Gail Dunne mentioned the upgrade on the car park in Roundwood. He asked if there was any update on the traffic survey done in the area and also who owned the land for the car park. District Engineer Kevin Scanlon stated that Executive Engineer Alan Martin had put traffic counters for the survey and would come back with that information. Cllr Shay Cullen said that the land was belonging to Wicklow County Council.

CATHAOIRLEACH SHAY CULLEN CONCLUDED THE MEETING AT 4.30 PM

Signed: _____
CATHAOIRLEACH

Signed: _____
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Dated: _____